(b) if so, whether this decision of Government would not affect adversely the working of the banks because the banks have their glorious tradition and they have their reliable working;

(c) whether it is a also a fact that more bank staff would get encouraged to take VRS due to this decision of Government and the number of employees would decrease further and the services of the banks would get affected fully; and

(d) if so, whether Government have contemplated to solve these problems?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRi S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) and (b) Government has indicated that it would consider specific proposals from banks as they arise. Any such proposal for consolidation by way of merger etc. of one nationalised bank with another nationalised bank has to come from the management of the banks concerned with Government playing a supportive role as the common shareholder. No directive on consolidation has been issued by the Government or the Reserve Bank of India The Boards of the banks have to take a decision in this regard based on the synergy levels of merging/consolidating entities.

(e) and (d) While supporting any merger proposal, Government will ensure that the interests of the stakeholders and employees of merging banks are adequately protected.

Operation of Wadi Scheme of NABARD

†1652. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the State where the 'Wadi' scheme of NABARD is being operated and since when this scheme is being implemented;

(b) whether it is a fact that this scheme has not been started in most of the backward States in the country;

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) to what extent the backward people got the benefit in those States where this scheme is being operated;

(e) whether any survey has been conducted in this regard, if so, the results thereof, and if not, the reasons therefor; and

(f) the steps being taken by Government to operate this scheme successfully in all the backward States in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) The Adivasi Development Programmes (Wadi Programmes) supported by KfW, Germany are under implementation in Gujarat since 1995 and in Maharashtra since 2000.

(b) and (c) The Wadi Programme supported by KfW, Germany, is based on 100% grant assistance. The programmes are implemented in Gujarat and Maharashtra as per the pre isions of respective agreements with KfW, Germany. Since, the donor agency was already operating in these two States in connection with certain other project, this programme was also initiated in these States only.

(d) and (e) There is an in-built provision in the agreements of respective programmes entered into between KfW and NABARD for evaluation through five evaluation studies at periodic intervals and also at the end of the programme through external agencies. This is in addition to baseline survey conducted at the beginning. Accordingly, NABARD has conducted a baseline survey of the programme in Gujarat in 1995-96 and two evaluation studies in 2000 and 2003. For Maharashtra, Wadi Programme eing recent, only baseline survey has been completed. The outcome of the study for Gujarat is Annexed as Statement (See below).

(f) Wadi model has been found to be very effective in creatingsustainable livelihoods for tribal families. NABARD has created a dedicated fund called 'Tribal Development Fund" (TDF) with a corpus of Rs. 50 croce in 2004. The fund will be used as loan/grant to replicate Wadi Model in other tribal predominant areas of the country.

Statement

Outcome of the Studies conducted for Gujarat

- "WADIS" spread over 25,000 acre on the private land of around 25,500 families spread over 345 villages have been established in two States i.e. Maharashtra and Gujarat. These lands considered as wastelands and non-productive assets,have become productive and sustainable assets.
- Production has already started in Gujarat programme with 350 Mt. of cashew and over 500 Mt. of mango, which has been instrumental in establishing 10 village level processing units providing perennial employment to 180 landless tribal people, most of which are women.
- Ten tribal co-operative societies have also been registered to facilitate the continuation of the programme once the external support is withdrawn.
- The availability of protective irrigation through water resources development has increased cropping intensity. A shift in cropping pattern towards commercial crops such as vegetables and pulses has resulted in generating regular income.
- The production of Vermicomposting and Nadep compost and emphasis on Bio-pesticides in the programme have opened up avenues for production of organically grown produce.
- Seasonal migration has been reduced to a great extent as "WADI" provides round the year employment opportunities to tribal families. There is a substantial rise in employment opportunities for landless in procuring and marketing of farm produce and processing of cashew and mango as well as other income generating activities in non-farm sector.
- The health programme has reduced the incidences of infectious diseases in the area and has improved health and sanitation in the villages.
- SHG movement has provided voice to tribal women and brought out their entrepreneurial skills which is demonstrated by the micro enterprises and income generating activities such as nursery management, vermicomposting etc. undertaken by them.
- The project was presented as a successful replicable model for poverty alleviation in the developing countries at the UNDP Forum of ministers for Poverty and Environment in New York, USA in 1999 as well as at the global dialogue in Hannover, Germany.

- The most striking contribution of the WADI programme is empowerment of the people to organize their affairs successfully. Though lack of basic infrastructural facilities like schools, banks, health centres, telephone, bus service etc., at village level, WADI has given way to many successful entrepreneurs in these remote villages.

Clearance of projects for infrastructure development

1653. DR. NARAYAN SINGH MANAKLAO: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is~a fact that Investment Commission has cleared few projects for infrastructure development in various States;

(b) if so, the details of such projects, State-wise;

(c) the criteria for selection of projects location; and

(d) the projects that have been conceived for the State of Rajasthan and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) to (d) The Commission does not clear projects.

Unsustainable fiscal liabilities of Kerala

1654. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the CAG report for 2004 relating to Kerala shows the fiscal liabilities of the State as unsustainable;

(b) if so, how far the adverse trend influence the revenue receipts;

(c) what is the total amount of loan availed from ADB till May, 2005 including the rate of interest and conditions of repayment therein; and

(d) whether there is any direct relationship between the growing fiscal deficit and the loan availed from ADB and if so, upto what extent?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM): (a) and (b) The consolidated debt and fiscal liabilities of Government of Kerala as a ratio of their total revenue receipts.